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# GAP

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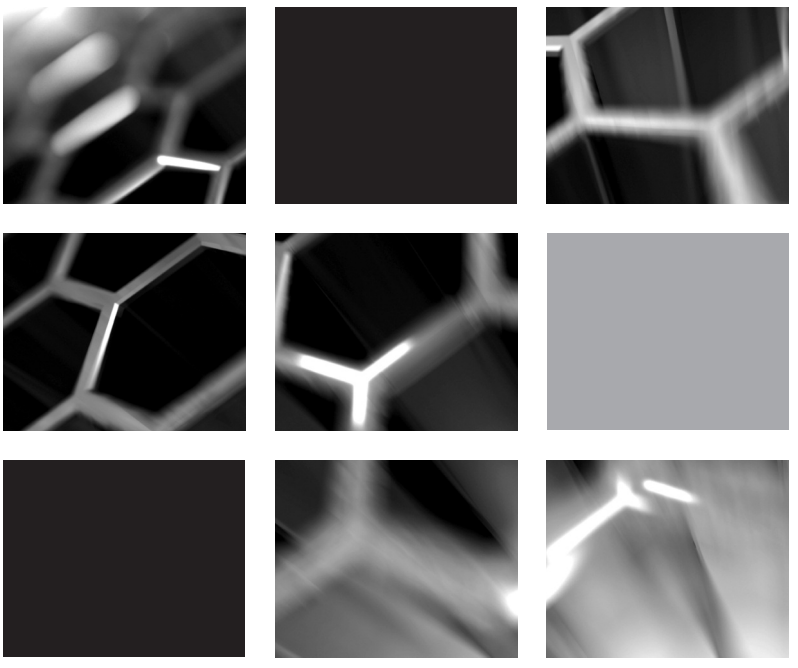
Edited by Glenys Jones



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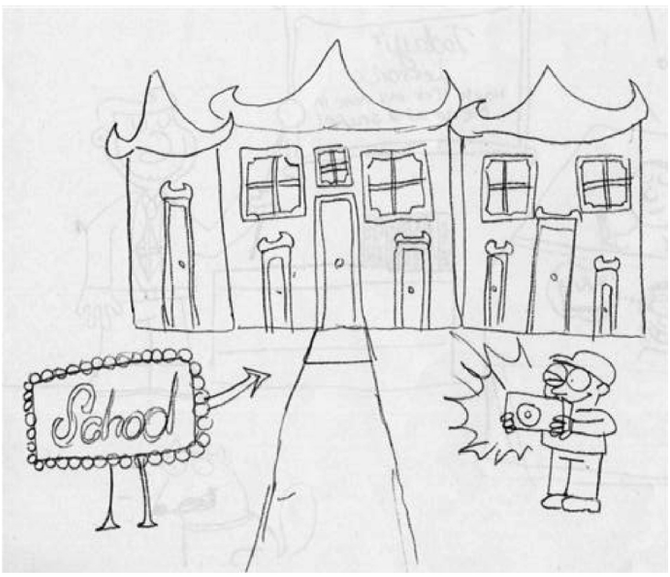
# Do you want to know what sort of school I want? Optimum features of school provision for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

**Jane Williams and Diane Hanke,** UK, GAP Journal, October, 2007

## Editorial comment

Jane Williams is an Educational Psychologist with a special interest in ASD working in Dudley Educational Psychology Service. Diane Hanke is Head of Dudley Autism Outreach Service. This paper describes how the Drawing the Ideal Self technique (Moran, 2001), based on Personal Construct Psychology (Kelly, 1955) was adapted to seek the views of 15 mainstream pupils with ASD on what they felt were the most important features of school provision. It is a fascinating paper and clearly shows the value of asking the pupils themselves how they experience school and what they might like to be different. Gaining the pupils' perspectives is high on the agenda and the work described here could usefully be applied to other areas of their lives. It is important for staff to have training in the methods used so that they meet ethical standards and good information is obtained on which to question and perhaps change current practice.

*Ideal school drawn by a Year 10 pupil with Asperger syndrome who said: "It's more of a palace than a school."*




**Acknowledgements**

With grateful thanks to pupils with ASD in Dudley mainstream schools who gave their insightful views and to all members of the Autism Outreach Team who enabled them to do so. Many thanks to Heather Moran for generously making time for fruitful professional discussions regarding adaptations to the Drawing the Ideal Self technique that she devised, to Colette Soan for advice regarding appropriate research methodology and to Glenys Jones for her supportive comments and guidance.

## Introduction

There are many reasons why professionals in a local authority, making plans to create new educational provision for mainstream pupils with an ASD and to enhance existing provision, should seek the views of pupils who may attend. Recently, there has been a widening acceptance, at a practice, as well as at an ideological level, that pupils should be involved as much as possible in making decisions about issues that affect them directly. Indeed such models of practice are supported by robust national and international articles and codes. A complementary view is inherent within Personal Construct Psychology (Kelly, 1955), namely that we all behave in a way that makes sense to us across different contexts as a result of our own view of the world. Therefore if educational provision is specifically designed to account for the way in which pupils view the world and includes consideration of the elements most important to them it is more likely that pupils will fully engage with the learning opportunities presented. This paper offers an account of an evaluation study in an urban borough that seeks to establish the optimum features of school provision for pupils with an ASD.

Pupils with an ASD are likely to have a highly distinctive, even idiosyncratic, view of the world as a result of their condition (Jordan and Powell, 1995). There has been much research into the way in that the pupils with ASD perceive the environment around them. The significance of sensory issues has been highlighted by authors such as Bogdashina (2003). Such thinking has informed current practice, educational approaches and provision. Detailed accounts of childhood experiences written by adults who have an ASD are now widely available. These provide a remarkable insight into the past school experiences of some pupils with an ASD (Sainsbury, 2000; Lawson 1998) and we are indebted to such authors. In the main these are retrospective accounts that look back upon childhood experiences from the adult perspective, thus taking advantage of further insight to provide a coherent narrative of the past. In order to plan specific provision in the local authority, it was considered to be vital to consider the views of today's pupils with an ASD who are currently accessing educational provision in the borough in order to gather the most illuminative information regarding relevant features of their school life in this local context.

Given the nature of the type of difficulties that pupils with ASD encounter in communicating their views in everyday social interactions, it is not immediately obvious how such a group can be approached in a manner that accounts for their needs. This report describes how the Drawing the Ideal Self technique (Moran, 2001), based on Personal Construct Psychology (Kelly, 1955), was adapted to seek the views of 15 mainstream pupils with ASD regarding the most important features of school provision.

## Educational and social context

Historically, the views of children regarding many aspects of their lives, including their education, were not routinely sought or given precedence. However, Children's Services departments working within local authorities are now charged with seeking and accounting for the views of the children and young people whom they serve through a variety of national and international frameworks. The most notable comes from the international perspective, Article 12, adopted at the United Nations Convention (1989). Educationally, there has been recognition of these rights and an acknowledgement that increased participation of pupils is likely to impact on school improvement. Norwich et al (2006) provide an overview of this work and some of the research that it has stimulated. With local authorities now making provision for social care needs and educational services together within Children's Services there are opportunities for increased integration of work from the social care perspective. The Children's Act (1989) provides the foundation for much of this work.

There is an increasing number of services being developed in the UK 'with children, for children'. A notable recent example from health services has been the model of consultation and practice offered by the new Evelina Children's Hospital as part of the Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Trust. A Children's Board was established at the design stage of the project and the views of children were sought on "everything from the menus to the design of the building itself" (Evelina Children's Hospital Supplement, 2005).

## Valid reflection of children's perceptions

A number of methods and approaches have been used to gather the views of children. In the educational arena work in this area has been gaining prominence and momentum. For example, Gersch (1996) developed the

Listen to Me project that aimed to involve pupils more actively in their education. A number of researchers have pursued this agenda on behalf of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN), often supported by voluntary agencies. Lewis (2004) offers a summary of the key principles for consideration when conducting work with pupils with learning difficulties while acknowledging that: 'We lack evidence concerning the authenticity, credibility and reliability of particular methods for exploring the views of children with learning difficulties' *(*p.4*).* Other materials are available to provide organisations with a framework of standards of practice through which the active involvement of children and young people can be evaluated, for example the Hear By Rights National Youth Agency toolkit (2005).

A comprehensive review of the participation of pupils with a Special Educational Need (SEN) in decision-making in the South West of England was conducted by Norwich et al (2006). A self-selecting group of schools responded to a postal questionnaire and further research into their work was carried out. A range of methods of eliciting views were described such as listening to children talk informally, talking about specific topics, using open questions and observations. Children were given the opportunity to record their views in writing through an adult acting as a scribe and by drawing pictures. Other materials such as picture prompts and the use of computer programs were that reported as being useful as was the use of a 'child-friendly' questionnaire. Talking to pupils was described as the "most common" mode of eliciting pupils' views.

In practice many methods rely upon adult interpretation of what is relevant about a child's responses in a particular conversation or in using a certain tool rather than being a vehicle through which a pupil may communicate their construing in a way that is meaningful for them. This is particularly apparent where semi-structured interviews and questionnaires are used. Here the authors of the tool are usually adults who donate the constructs or elements that are deemed meaningful for the pupils to consider rather than the pupils generating these themselves.

Finally, some aspects of the perceived barriers described by the study by Norwich et al (2006) warrant further consideration. A common theme that emerged was described as:

> *'the perception of how challenging it was to elicit the views of … those with more severe communication and intellectual difficulties.'*

The authors continue:

> *'This experience underlined the importance of finding alternative and adapted methods for some children with SEN.'* (p. 265)

It is the view of the authors that an application of Personal Construct Psychology in this context may provide just such a novel approach.

## Context and selection of technique

Relevant agencies within the local authority in this study have a Special Educational Needs (SEN) Strategy to meet the needs of all pupils who are assessed as requiring specialist educational provision. In order to meet the targets that relate to pupils with ASD, a specific plan was developed and a multi-agency group of relevant professionals was charged with implementing the plan as the Autism SEN Strategy Group. As part of a review of the views of stakeholders a small working group was convened to consider children's views about potential provision. The first task was a challenging one: to agree a method of gathering views that would be suitable for use with school age pupils with a diagnosis of ASD. A variety of potential tools was considered including a questionnaire format with closed/open questions, multiple-choice questions and the use of pictures/symbols. Each of these tools had potential merit. However, it was difficult to select one that would be accessible and appropriate for the variety of cognitive and social/communication abilities and the age range of this group of pupils with ASD.

The authors recognised that there was a need to select a tool that was practical and would make a genuine attempt to gain a true picture of pupils' views without pre-determining what these might be. In essence we were searching for a way to 'understand children's understanding' (Ravenette, 1977). We therefore looked more widely at techniques that we use regularly in our work as an educational psychologist and teacher to gain pupils' views in other contexts.

One such technique, the Drawing the Ideal Self technique developed by Moran (2001) draws upon Personal Construct Psychology (Kelly, 1955) and

gathers a pupil's core beliefs or constructs in a way that is engaging for them. 'Core constructs' are deeply held beliefs about the world and how it works, which affect our behaviour. We all behave in a way that makes sense to us in many different contexts because of our view of the world. Butler and Green (1998) describe the way in which all children "grapple to understand the world and their experiences in it". This seems a particularly apt descriptor for pupils with ASD who appear to be provided with a distinctive lens through which they focus their investigations and enquiries.

Attwood (2006) has described Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) as being 'well suited to the mindset of people with Asperger's syndrome'. Recently Moran (2006) has described in detail the features of PCP that allow this approach gracefully to accommodate the views of children with ASD. There is a focus in PCP specifically upon the way in which the child views the world. Since this is a personal view it cannot be wrong and should be respected as such. PCP can that reveal how a child's view steers their decisions about how to behave. Consequently, greater understanding of these views will help those around the child to anticipate and provide for their needs.

Within PCP Kelly sees us all as scientists since we develop and build our theories about life into a system of constructs that encapsulate our experiences. This construct system provides each of us with our own personalised 'guide to life' and we test out the validity of many constructs daily through our behaviour. Such constructs are said to be developed through our recognition of a series of contrasting experiences. For example, a child who has developed a construct of the term 'friendly' will have a view of the contrast to this. This is not the same as the opposite of the term, which may be universally recognised as 'unfriendly', but rather will be personal to the child and since he has an ASD maybe a term that could less easily be predicted such as 'noisy'.

## Drawing the Ideal School technique

The Drawing the Ideal Self technique was developed by Moran (2001 and 2006) as a way of enabling children to show how they see themselves by asking them to sketch a picture of the 'sort of person they would not like to be' and contrasting this with a second drawing of the 'sort of person they would like to be'. Further important details are gathered in a structured way through asking the child to draw and comment on different aspects of the life of each person drawn while the adult acts as scribe, noting the child's exact words. During individual therapeutic work the child is guided through a process of deciding where he is now compared to how he would like to be. Potential for change that the child would like to make is discussed and adult support enlisted as appropriate.

Usually the technique is used by professionals with training in therapeutic interventions who regularly access supervision from other experienced practitioners. In our practice we have found that providing this technique is sensitively used within the safety net provided by counselling principles, it proves invariably to be a powerful tool with which to support the progress and development of children with a wide variety of needs or priorities in an educational context. The technique is popular with children as it is a novel approach and pupils believe their views are valued by the adult who completes the work with them.

This successful method was therefore adapted, following discussion with Moran, to gather pupils' views about school provision and is presented here as the Drawing the Ideal School technique. We carefully considered the purpose for which information about children's views was being gathered and developed the format further. Such development included consideration of the children's experience of current provision and desires for the future, held within their views of what is 'ideal' provision for them.

The adaptations made were designed to generate children's views of what they perceive to be optimum elements of educational provision. For example, aspects such as the school environment, staff qualities, other pupils and school activities are covered without pre-empting in any way what the child's views might be. Aspects of children's educational experiences that they find to be helpful and those that are not can be identified (see *Appendix 1* for further details of the technique).

## Research methods and interpretation

At the heart of Personal Construct Psychology, Kelly (1955) firmly established a stance that accepts the subjective views of the individual as being wholly legitimate. An acknowledgement was made of this position in developing the research methodology for this study. Consequently, methods were drawn from a more

qualitative, constructivist perspective that values individual responses. The researchers intended to carry out 'research *with* people and *for* people rather than on people' (Reason 1988).

Dudley Autism Outreach Team (AOT) of teachers and teaching assistants supports pupils with a diagnosis of an Autistic Spectrum Disorder who attend mainstream school in the borough. At the time of this study the whole team caseload stood at approximately 150 pupils aged between 5 and 16 years. Since it was not possible to seek the views of all the pupils at this time, a random sample of 10 per cent of pupils was chosen by listing the children's names in alphabetical order and selecting every tenth child. Each of the 15 pupils approached opted to take part and engaged in completing the activity. Further details regarding the ages of the pupils, type of school attended, diagnosis and hours of support provided appear below in *Figure 1*.

Staff from the team was matched with children on their caseload to ensure familiarity and put into pairs to carry out the work. Working in pairs enabled one adult to focus on interacting directly with the child to elicit their views, while the other could concentrate on recording verbatim responses during the process. Parental and school consent to approach the pupils was gained. It was possible to ensure that staff familiar with individual children were able to work with them and hopefully alleviate possible anxieties for the child related to meeting and working with new people.

It was acknowledged that uniformity in approach and delivery was important to ensure that every child had the same opportunities to express their own views during the process.

The team was therefore given training in the technique by the Educational Psychologist involved in the study and was provided with written guidelines (see *Appendix 1*), an introductory script and a proforma on which to record the pupil's responses. Confidentiality was assured and any issues arising from the work were with the pupil's permission incorporated into continuing support provided by the AOT team member.

The open-ended nature of this technique produced results that required careful analysis in order to produce a summary of the views of pupils. A simple coding system was used in order to refine the views provided by the pupils into themes and to develop a theory to explain the data (after Robson, 2002 and Lofland, 1984). The authors worked together in a pair to evaluate data and thus address some issues of validity related to the coding system. While strenuous attempts were made to remain true to the individual views of the pupils, some minimal 'adult' interpretation was inevitably necessary in order to highlight what seemed for the wider group to be the most relevant features of school provision and the impact of these upon their everyday life in school. It is acknowledged that the analysis of this work was conducted by researchers with a neurotypical perspective.

The themes identified were summarised and finally two explanatory models or diagrams were produced to present children's views in an easily accessible format (after Miles and Huberman, 1994) to share with the wider group and inform future planning. Such work can therefore be considered to be evaluation research that seeks to interpret or illuminate the views of pupils with ASD (Burden, 1998).

## Results

The models that appear as *Figure 2* and *Figure 3* provide a visual explanation of the research and the findings gathered. The two main themes are summarised here.

*Environmental features*

### Building design and equipment

The design of the school building and the way in which it is equipped was mentioned as being important to many children. The following features were seen as being optimum:

- access to natural light
- appropriate size of building
- classrooms that are not cramped
- appropriate amount of good sized, comfortable furniture

### Ethos and policies

Pupils expressed the view that they wanted to attend a school that had a 'fun' ethos where appropriate behaviour is rewarded and that is clean, luxurious, well maintained and 'green'.

**Figure 1:** Details of the pupils taking part in the study

| Pupil | Diagnosis | Age at time of study | Academic Year | Gender | Phase | Code of Practice | Hours of support on statement |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Asperger syndrome and ADHD | 6 years 9 months | 2 | Male | Primary | Statement | 20 |
| 2 | Asperger syndrome and Dyspraxia | 7 years | 2 | Male | Primary | Statement | 15 |
| 3 | Asperger syndrome | 7 years 3 months | 3 | Male | Primary | SA Plus | |
| 4 | Asperger syndrome | 8 years 3 months | 4 | Female | Primary | SA | |
| 5 | Asperger syndrome | 8 years 5 months | 4 | Male | Primary | Statement | 20 |
| 6 | Asperger syndrome | 9 years 4 months | 5 | Male | Primary | Statement | 10 |
| 7 | Autistic Spectrum Disorder with ADHD and elective mutism | 10 years 8 months | 6 | Male | Primary | SA Plus | |
| 8 | Autistic Spectrum Disorder | 11 years | 6 | Male | Primary | Statement | 10 |
| 9 | Autistic Spectrum Disorder | 11 years 11 months | 7 | Male | Secondary | Statement | 10 |
| 10 | Autistic Spectrum Disorder | 12 years 1 month | 8 | Female | Secondary | SA Plus | |
| 11 | Autistic Spectrum Disorder | 12 years 7 months | 8 | Male | Secondary | Statement | 10 |
| 12 | Asperger syndrome | 13 years 5 months | 9 | Male | Secondary | SA Plus | |
| 13 | Asperger syndrome | 14 years 1 month | 10 | Male | Secondary | SA Plus | |
| 14 | Asperger syndrome | 14 years 9 months | 10 | Male | Secondary | Statement | 20 |
| 15 | Autistic Spectrum Disorder | 14 years 11 months | 10 | Male | Secondary | Statement | 20 |

*Qualities and characteristics of staff*

Adult role and responsibility

Pupils noted the following features to be important and these are presented using the pupils' own words and phrases:

- knowledgeable about the subject
- being prepared for the lesson
- dressed in clean, smart clothes and wearing shoes
- knowing each pupil

Observable characteristics of adults

- enjoy being with the pupils and willing to play games with them
- smiling, happy and really friendly staff

## Discussion

As a technique to use with pupils with ASD the Drawing the Ideal School technique drawn from PCP approaches (Moran, 2001 and 2006) proved to be an accessible and valuable tool. Staff working with the individual pupils gave very positive feedback about the work. Many commented on the value of the open-ended nature of the activity. During the process of carrying out the study the researchers became concerned that the pupils had not been asked specifically about playground facilities. In the event the pupils themselves spontaneously generated comments about 17 different recreational facilities that they would like in an ideal school. Six children highlighted a lack of playground facilities as being a feature of their non-ideal school with one pupil describing this as: "just rocks outside". This omission therefore inadvertently highlighted one of the benefits of the technique. It does not pre-empt the views of pupils by supplying them with adult generated ideas to comment upon as would have been the case had a questionnaire or semi-structured interview been used.

**Figure 2:** Explanatory model to illustrate the optimum features of school provision as identified by pupils (After Miles and Huberman 1994)

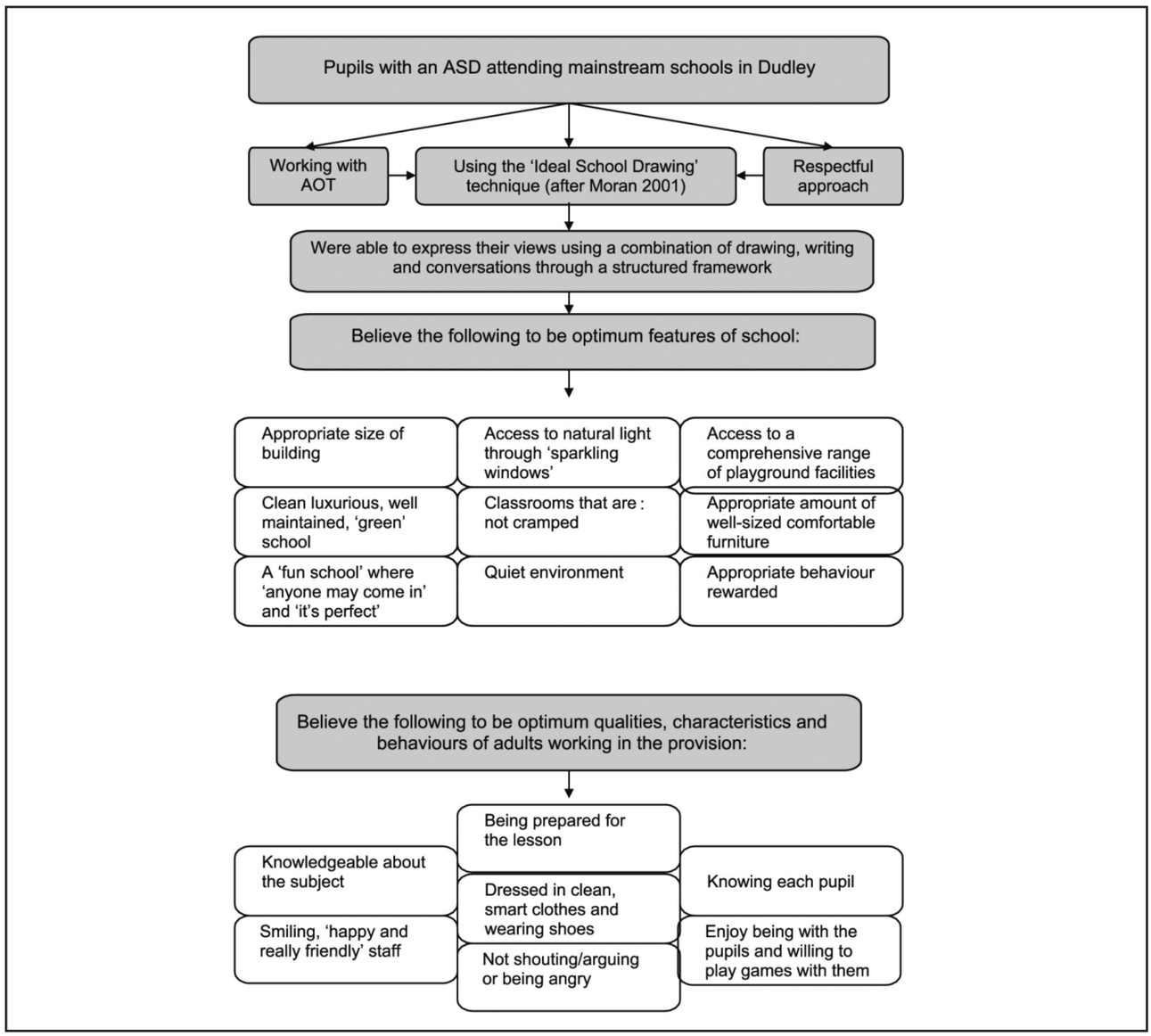


**Figure 3:** Explanatory model to illustrate the pupil's view of the likely outcomes in non-ideal and ideal schools (After Miles and Huberman 1994)

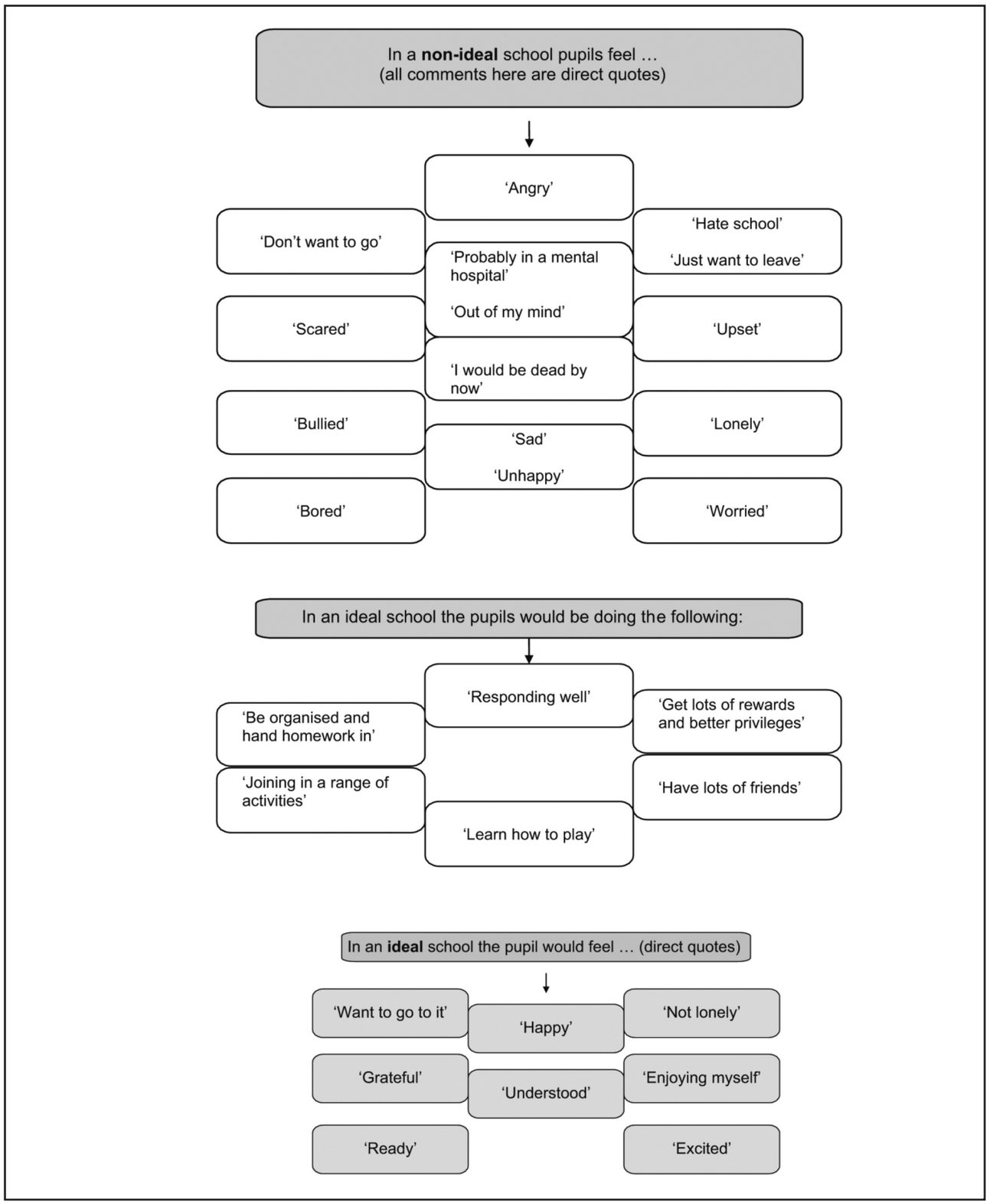
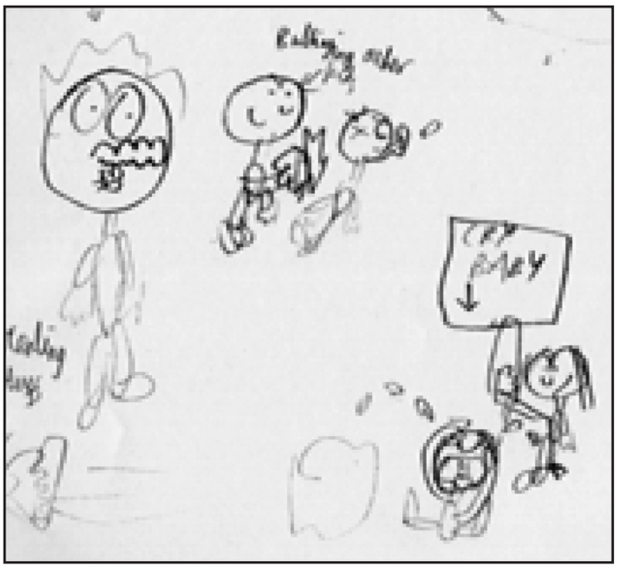


**Figure 4:** Some aspects of playground behaviour drawn by a Year 8 pupil with Asperger syndrome. (Other children are described as stealing things, bullying each other, hitting others and saying "cry baby")




The views of the children were fascinating and often surprising to those working with them. Most importantly, all the pupils could engage with the work according to their view of the world and expressed this in a way that made sense to them. For some pupils this even involved the use of cartoon or TV characters or other fantasy characters successfully to communicate their views.

The majority of drawings produced were easily recognisable and accessible. Most pupils that elaborated their views orally, commenting on their drawings for the adult to record. Some pupils chose to write labels or to annotate their drawings with speech bubbles and further comments. The coding technique used successfully accommodated all elements of the contributions made by pupils whether or not these were drawn or spoken. Some pupils did not limit themselves to the questions asked: for example, one pupil spoke at length about the importance to him of environmental issues. There were comments from pupils that seemed to imply that some elements of predictability within the delivery of the activity were reassuring for pupils with ASD. One pupil commented: "Next thing will be draw a classroom isn't it?" and another pupil commented about the process: "This is actually fun. When you have fun it goes quick."

In terms of the views expressed by the pupils many of the adults involved with the research were taken aback at the level of sophistication of some of the ideas expressed through drawings by a group of pupils all of whom have an ASD. Two particular elements of provision highlighted by pupils were surprising. The first of these is that of the ethos of the school and knowledge of the policies and practices necessary to achieve this. Some pupils expressed this through the choice of name for their schools (as shown in *Figure 5* below) and others by drawing or describing the observable features that to them indicate a certain ethos. For example, one pupil said the ideal school would have the motto: "*No one's perfect*".

Another pupil wanted to attend a school that is in a pleasant, light and well-maintained building and partly expressed this by requesting "windows that sparkle".

A second element of provision of great importance to pupils is the nature of the adults who support them. This is a sensitive area and, given that pupils with ASD may not feel socially inhibited about expressing their views when asked directly, it was anticipated that this might be a difficult area to report back upon. However, this was not the case and the pupils actually offered a number of

**Figure 5:** School names given by Year 4 and Year 8 pupils

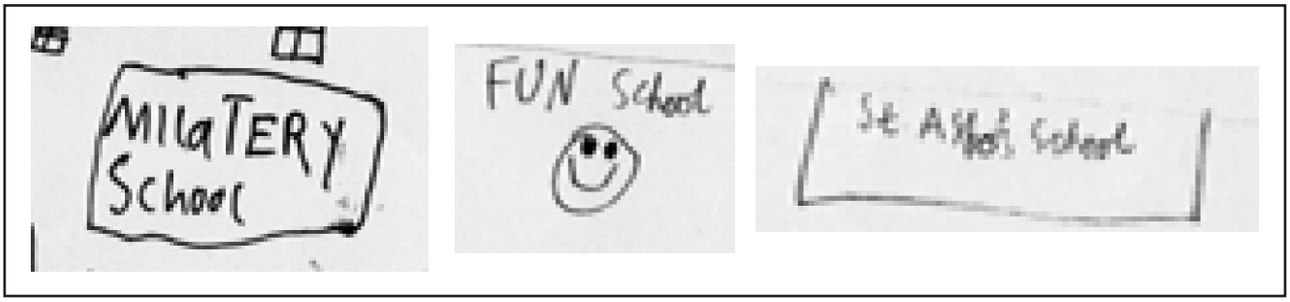
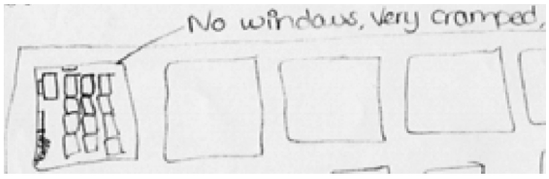
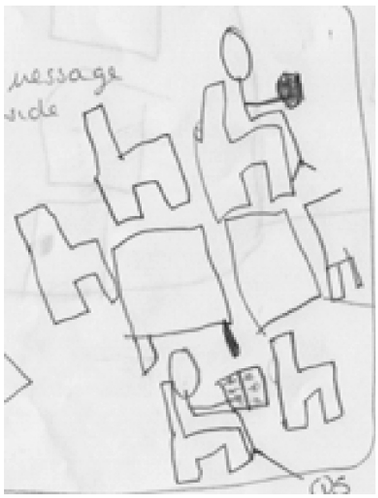


**Figure 6:** Small/ cramped classrooms as drawn by Years 5 and 8 pupils with Asperger syndrome



insightful perspectives about the personal qualities of the adults whom they would like to be teaching and supporting them as shown in *Figure 7* below.

## Recommendations and future developments

The recommendations and developments listed below were proposed by the authors to the Autism Implementation Group following the consultation with pupils. The pupils with ASD whose views were sought provided a clear set of criteria for the development of plans for school accommodation, fixtures, furniture and layout. In addition, some important pointers were provided as to the role, responsibility and personal qualities of staff.

1 The criteria generated by pupils should be developed further into an audit tool through which pupils with ASD currently attending mainstream school in the borough could audit existing provision according to the criteria.

2 Developments and improvements should be made to current placements according to the criteria proposed by pupils as interim measures while further plans for dedicated provision for pupils with ASD are agreed.

3 Future plans to develop dedicated ASD provision could be made with regard for all aspects of the criteria provided by children.

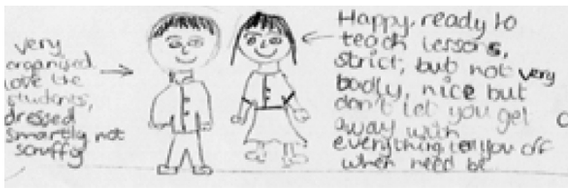
4 Some aspects of adult role, responsibilities and qualities highlighted by pupils could be included in

**Figure 7:** Drawings to illustrate staff qualities

*Staff in staffroom of non-ideal school drawn by Year 8 pupil, commenting on pupils as being "awful" and "boring"*


*Staff at ideal school drawn by same pupil describing pupils as "lovely", "especially all of them".*

*Staff in ideal school as drawn and labelled by Year 8 pupil*



staff person specifications as these are developed in future.

5 This technique could be used with pupils in the future to monitor the effectiveness of new provision developed within mainstream schools.

## Concluding comments

This paper outlines a genuine attempt to gather and present the views of pupils with ASD regarding optimum school features in order to inform the planning of future provision. A tool to gather pupils' perspectives was developed that drew upon a novel approach: Drawing the Ideal Self technique (Moran, 2001 and 2006).

The Drawing the Ideal School technique provided a structure that enabled pupils to express their views using a mixture of drawing, talking and writing. Although the technique itself is essentially 'content free', the pupils generated many elements of commonality. Since the pupil responses on the whole were coherent and unequivocal it was possible to draw out key themes with minimal adult interpretation. The pupils were able to describe in some detail key environmental features of their ideal school. Ethos and policies of provision proved to be an area of importance. With regard to adults, roles and responsibilities were a focus along with qualities and characteristics of staff.

While this technique has been used extensively with children in an individual therapeutic context, there are as yet no reports of such an approach being adapted and used to present the views of a larger group of children. Perhaps this is due in part to the fact that great care must be taken in using a tool designed for individual use by a trained therapist and counsellors in a broader educational context with a larger number of pupils. Attempts were made to mitigate against any risk of the integrity of the technique being diluted. Pupils worked with a familiar member of staff who had been trained in the approach and was supported by another trained colleague. An integral part of the training was focused upon the need for the adult to make a wholly respectful response to the pupil. Thus at an individual level the views of pupils were gathered as if each pupil were the only person whose views were being gathered. As a result individual needs, for example to talk further about special interests, were accommodated as part of the process. While it is fully acknowledged that any presentation of a child's views by an adult may be subject at some level to a degree of subjective interpretation, it is our view that the coding system used resulted in a minimal amount of intrusion upon the pupil's views for the purposes of reporting.

In terms of the outcomes for pupils of attending either an ideal or non-ideal school provision, pupils were remarkably perceptive. Some pupils gave graphic details about the adverse impact on their well-being and mental health that attending a non-ideal provision would bring. The positive impact and educational benefits of attending an ideal provision was described by most pupils. As researchers entrusted with such rich and fulsome constructs we now have the responsibility to ensure that such views are fully appreciated at all stages of planning and monitoring future school provision for pupils with ASD in our local authority.

We hope that this paper has demonstrated the effectiveness of the Drawing the Ideal School technique when used with care and understanding. We have found the technique to be a practical, time-efficient and popular tool with children and adults and shall continue to use it in a manner that remains true to the spirit of PCP in many aspects of our work. Other professionals have demonstrated an interest in adopting this approach in a range of contexts. We look forward to hearing about the work of other colleagues with an interest in this area.

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# Appendix 1: Guidelines for the Drawing the Ideal School technique

## 1 Introduction

The Drawing the Ideal School technique has been adapted from an approach developed by Moran (2001). Heather Moran has been a teacher and educational psychologist and now works as a clinical psychologist. The technique enables children to become actively involved in understanding themselves and expressing their views. It is based on ideas from Personal Construct Psychology, which was introduced by Kelly in 1955. This approach seeks to explore children's important or core constructs about themselves and how they view the world. Children (and adults) behave in a way that makes sense to them according to their own view of the world. We are likely to understand children (and the sort of provision that is most likely to help them) more fully if they are able to express these core constructs to us.

In summary this type of work attempts to:

> *"understand the child's unique perspective on life through the careful use of questions and extremely sensitive note of the child's answers."* (Moran, 2001)

The technique itself is simple to use once the child understands what is expected. This sheet gives guidelines for the adult completing the technique to follow and the next two pages list how to complete the technique.

## 2 Guidelines for use

1 Equipment needed: a black pen and two sheets of plain A4 sized paper

2 Allow about an hour to complete the activity, perhaps with a short break if necessary

3 Explain to the pupil that you are going to be doing the writing today, acting as scribe. This is to take the pressure off the pupil and keep the process moving

4 The pupil is asked to make quick drawings or sketches (rather than detailed drawings). Reassure the pupil that it doesn't matter if an error is made

5 It is important to record **exactly** what the pupil says using their own words

6 If the pupil is overly anxious about drawing, either model stick people drawings first or just record the pupil's verbal responses

7 Allow time for the pupil to process the requests – repeat/reword/simplify the questions if not understood

8 Provide reassurance that there are no right or wrong answers or responses

9 Provide encouragement and praise for the pupil's involvement with the activity

10 Be sensitive about sharing the drawings with others, ask the child's permission and ensure that other adults understand that the child has trusted you in revealing such views, which must be respected

11 Talk to other colleagues about planning any follow-up work that might be indicated

*Part 1: Drawing the kind of school you would not like*

The school

Think about the kind of school you would not like to go to. This is not a real school. Make a quick drawing of this school in the middle of this paper.

Tell me three things about this school. What kind of school is this?

The classroom
Think about the sort of classroom you would not like to be in. Make a quick drawing of this classroom in the school.

Draw some of the things in this classroom.

The children
Think about some of the children at the school you would not like to go to. Make a quick drawing of some of these children. What are the children doing? Tell me three things about these children.

The adults
Think about some of the adults at the school you would not like to go to. Make a quick drawing of some of these adults. What are the adults doing? Tell me three things about these adults.

Me
Think about the kind of school you would not like to go to. Make a quick drawing of what you would be doing at this school. Tell me three things about the way you feel at this school.

*Part 2: Drawing the kind of school you would like*
The school
Think about the kind of school you would like to go to. This is not a real school. Make a quick drawing of this school in the middle of this paper.

Tell me three things about this school. What kind of school is this?

The classroom
Think about the sort of classroom you would like to be in. Make a quick drawing of this classroom in the school.

Draw some of the things in this classroom.

The children
Think about some of the children at the school you would like to go to. Make a quick drawing of some of these children. What are the children doing? Tell me three things about these children.

The adults
Think about some of the adults at the school you would like to go to. Make a quick drawing of some of these adults. What are the adults doing? Tell me three things about these adults.

Me
Think about the kind of school you would like to go to. Make a quick drawing of what you would be doing at this school. Tell me three things about the way you feel at this school.